

It is the long littleness of the common lot,
 the silent
 suffering, the growing weakness and squalor
 of the body,
 the progress of prose in the soul. 11 y a
 horriblement de
 mal sur la terre'—the sense of that pressed
 harder on
 Crabbe than on Voltaire; but it also wrung
 from him some
 of his most real poetry. Set this picture of
 pauper graves
 beside Gray's *Country Churchyard*; it need not
 shrink from
 the comparison:

There lie the happy dead, from trouble
 free,
 And the glad parish pays the frugal fee.
 No more, O Death, thy victim starts to
 hear
 Churchwarden stern or kingly overseer;
 No more the fanner claims his humble
 bow;
 Thou art his lord, the best of tyrants thou.

But a closer and clearer parallel is, of course,
 with Gray's
 enemy, who encouraged Crabbe's
 beginnings, Samuel
 Johnson. Both men had the same uncanting
 sense of the
 world's real sorrows and the same
 impatience with the
 imaginary ones of hypochondriacs:

"Who with mock patience dire complaints
 endure
 "Which real pain, and that alone, can cure.

And how easily might lines like these come
 from *The*
Vanity of Human Wishes—

The rich man built a house both large and high;
 He enter'd in, and set him down to sigh;
 or:

Of Hermit Quarll we read, in island rare,
 Far from mankind, and seeming far from
 care;
 Safe from all want, and sound in every limb;
 Yes! there was he, and there was care with
 him;

or this picture of unrepentant age (though
 here, perhaps,

the actual source is Dryden's *All for Love*]:

Like a sad traveller who, at closing day,
 Finds he has wander* d widely from his way,
 Yet wanders on, nor will new paths explore,
 Till the night falls and he can walk no more.